

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

FEBRUARY 3rd, 1856.

Subject.—CHRIST'S CONVERSATION WITH NICODEMUS.

For Repeating. For Reading. John ii. 13-17. John iii. 1-18.

FEBRUARY 10th, 1856.

Subject.—TESTIMONY OF JOHN CONCERNING JESUS.

For Repeating. For Reading. John iii. 16-18. John iii. 19-36.

The following beautiful sketch of the celebrated Dr. Kitto will be read with deep interest by both children and adults. Such an instance of "the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties" is of very rare occurrence.

THE LITTLE DEAF BOY,

WHO BECAME

The Great Dr. Kitto.

SEVERAL years ago there lived at Plymouth Cornishman, named Kitto, who had once been a master builder, but who was then in poor circumstances, and worked as a mason. He had a little son called John, who, when he was only eleven years old, used to help his father in his work. This poor boy had not much education. At the age of twelve he wrote imperfectly, and knew a little arithmetic, but he was very fond of reading. About this time he was one day assisting in roofing a house, when he lost his footing, and fell to the ground, a height of thirty-five feet. For nearly a fortnight he was insensible. Then he began to recover, but in consequence of the injury he had received, he was quite deaf. What a sad thing this was! He could not hear his friends when they talked to him, and he was not strong enough to work now. He longed for books, but his father had very few, and these the poor lad read for hours. At last the father's poverty became so great that he could not tell how to support his deaf son, and so John was taken into the workhouse. There he was taught shoe-making, and at the age of seventeen was bound apprentice to a person of that trade in the town. His master was most unkind, and required him to work from six in the morning till ten at night. Yet, even then when he used to come home very tired in the evening, instead of going to sleep at once, he would sit up to read and study. How many boys who think it a hardship to go to school might learn from John Kitto to value their privileges. At last a person who had become interested in him told the magistrates how unjustly his master treated him, and he was removed from his situation, and went back to the workhouse again. He wrote a statement of his master's unkindness for the magistrates to read. This was so well expressed, that it attracted attention, and some gentlemen raised money for him, took him from the workhouse, and, for the next twelve months he was occupied in studying and improving his mind. One of his friends was proprietor of a newspaper, and he invited John Kitto to write for this newspaper, which he did; and afterwards wrote and published a small book. For several succeeding years he was engaged in different situations and employments—some at home, and some abroad. He accompanied two gentlemen on a voyage up the Mediterranean, and was two years at Malta; then he went to Asia, and was three years at Bagdad. Indeed, he visited a great many foreign countries—Russia, and Spain, and Italy, and several of the places we read of often in the Bible. When he returned to England he published a work which established his reputation as a scholar. This was the "Pictorial Bible"—that is, the Bible printed with pictures and descriptions of the different nations, and animals, and countries, and plants spoken of in the Scriptures. He wrote many other valuable books afterwards. And all these things were done by a man who had once been a poor workhouse boy, and who was quite deaf. He could speak himself, you know; but when persons wanted to converse with him, as he could not hear them speak, they were obliged either to write what they had to say, or else to talk by means of the finger alphabet. Can you tell what I mean by that? It is a plan that some people invented to help deaf people, by which letters

are made by putting the fingers in different positions. Thus the thumb stands for A. Clasp the hands together is W; and so on, a different sign for every letter in the alphabet. John Kitto, or, as he was now called, Dr. Kitto, wrote, as I said before, many excellent books. He married, and had several children; and he supported his family by his writings. A few years ago his health began to fail. The Queen then gave him a pension of £100 a year to assist him. Latterly he became so much worse, that the doctors told him there was no chance for his recovery unless he gave up writing and studying altogether. It was thought that it might be better for him to go abroad, and some of his friends subscribed to raise the necessary amount of money, and in August, 1854, he removed with his wife and family to a beautiful place in Germany, famous for its mineral springs. But his stay was marked with severe trials. First, his youngest child, an infant, died after five weeks' illness; and three weeks later, his eldest child, a daughter, who had been very delicate for some time, was taken from him. She was both good and highly gifted; but her parents were comforted in the midst of their deep sorrow, for they saw that she was (to use her father's words) "strong in the assured belief that to depart and be with Christ was far better for her than aught that life could have in store."

Dr. Kitto's own health suffered from these afflictions, but there was no marked change till the 24th of last November, when he felt very ill on awaking early in the morning. However, he went to sleep again, and rose as usual; but at breakfast was seized with giddiness, and became insensible. Medical advice was summoned, and different remedies tried, but in vain. Two or three times he said to his wife, "Tell me, is this death?" She replied that it was, but this did not trouble him. Throughout the day, which was one of intense suffering, he was generally conscious, though unable to converse; at its close he died.

There is no need to mourn for him, for he passed away from a world where he had known much pain and sorrow to a world where pain and sorrow cannot come. Though he never heard the voices of his wife and children upon earth, yet he listens to the voices of his angel-children now—for he is no longer deaf. He is where all are healed of their diseases.—From The Montreal Sunday School Record.

Miscellaneous.

The Short Candle.

As I sat in my chamber, I saw a little girl working by the light of a candle. It was burnt down almost to the socket. I perceived that she pined her needle very fast, and at length I overheard her say to herself, "I must be very industrious, for this is the only candle I have, and it is almost gone."

What a moral there is, thought I, in the words of this child? Surely I may learn from it. Life is but a short candle. It is almost gone, and I have no other. How earnestly engaged should I then be in every duty of life! While I have the light of life, how careful should I be to perform everything enjoined by my heavenly Master!

1. I ought to be in haste to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that when this light is extinguished there is no other allowed to mortals for preparation.

2. I ought to be alive to the immortal interests of my fellow-creatures, working while it is called to-day, striving to bring sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ; for my brief candle is soon to go out, and there can be no conversion of sinners in another world.

3. I ought to be unceasingly active in every act of benevolence, making as many happy as I can, relieving the miserable, and doing good to all within my reach; for this light is soon to be put out, and in the world the miserable and suffering will be beyond my reach.

4. I ought to use every talent for glory to God and the kingdom of Christ, working the works of Him that sent me while it is day, because the night cometh in which no man can work.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.—Eccles. ix.—Children's Friend.

Labor to save Souls.

John Angell James, makes some suggestive remarks on this point, drawn from his own experience:

"I am on the verge of old age, and the subject of not a few of its infirmities. It is now some consolation to me, to recollect that, amidst innumerable defects, I have in some measure kept in view the conversion of sinners, as the great end of the Christian ministry, and therefore of mine. I started in my preaching career, while yet a student, with this before my eyes, as the great purpose for which I entered the pulpit. This I have kept in view through a ministry of half a century. This I look at, with undiverted eye, in the latter scenes of my life; and taught both by my own experience, and by observation of all I have seen in the conduct of others, were I now beginning my course instead of gradually closing it, I should most deliberately choose this as my ministerial vocation, and consider that my official life would be almost a lost adventure, if this were not in some good measure its blessed result. In the pursuit of this object, notwithstanding all my defects and manifold imperfections, I have had my reward. I speak thus, not in a way of boasting, but of gratitude, and for the encouragement of my brethren in the ministry, especially its younger members. God will never suffer those altogether to fail in their object, who make the conversion of souls their great aim, and who employ in earnestness of prayer and action, his own methods, and depend upon his own Spirit for accomplishing it."

Preaching for the Times.

A very high mental discipline is required, at the present time, in order that preaching may be simple, plain and powerful. It was a remark of Archbishop Usher to the clergy of his diocese, "It takes all our learning to be simple." To preach plain and simple, says Luther, is a great art. These statements are true ones, though paradoxical, and contrary to a common notion respecting the influence of learning. It will, however, be found that in proportion as the human mind becomes a profound master of the truth, it becomes able to unfold and express it in such a manner, that the wayfaring man need not err, and also in such a way that the cultivated mind feels the very same influence from the actual verity. We see this illustrated in secular literature. The greatest minds, in any department, address the two extremes of human culture, as well as all the intermediates. Shakespeare is the poet of the masses, and also of the "laureate fraternity" of poets. That homely sense, which speaks like a swain to the swain, and that ethereal discourse, which is the admiration and the despair of the cultivated reason and imagination, both alike, flow from a thorough apprehension and a perfect knowledge of man and of nature.

ANECDOTE OF SIR COLIN CAMPBELL.—It is stated in connection with Sir Colin Campbell's recent visit to Windsor Castle, that in the course of the evening her Majesty made Sir Colin sit on the sofa beside her, and pointed out to him that the army in the Crimea could not get on without him, and that he must return. The gallant old soldier is said to have been so much affected by his Sovereign's kind language as to have burst into tears, and to have assured his Royal hostess that he would do anything for her, saying, "I'll even carry a musket for your Majesty!"

BENEFITS OF ADVERSITY.—A smooth sea never made a skilful mariner, neither does uninterrupted prosperity and success qualify for usefulness and happiness. The storms of adversity, like the storms of the ocean, arouse the faculties, excite the invention, prudence, skill, and fortitude of the voyager. The martyrs of ancient times, in bracing their minds to outward calamity, acquired a loftiness of purpose, a moral heroism, worth a life of softness and security.

RELIGION AND REASON.—If we lower all things to the standard of reason, our religion will retain nothing either mysterious or supernatural. If we outrage the principles of reason, our religion will be absurd and ridiculous.—Pascal.

The eye is an index of the character. Physiognomy reveals the secret of the heart.

Agriculture.

Husk Beds.

We advise all corn-growers to save their husks for under beds, believing they are the very best substance for this purpose that is or can be used. They should be the inner husks, clean and whole, and spread on some airy floor for a few days in order that they may become perfectly dry. Then they may be put into the ticks, and they will last for many years. We have some of these under beds now in our house which have been in use more than twenty years; and with an annual ventilation and beating, by being emptied on a chamber floor, and with a little replenishing with new husks, they are now as good and lively as when new. The husks had better not be stripped up as some have done. This makes the substance finer and more liable to mat up. Let the husks be whole, and, drying in irregular shapes, they will retain those shapes and lie lively in the bed for a long time. There is a beard, or furziness, on each husk, that prevents any insects crawling through the beds; consequently they are entirely free from vermin, of which straw is apt to be full. They are, therefore, clean, sweet and healthy. A good husk bed is equal to the best mattress for summer use, and we have slept in feather beds in winter not half so soft as these.

The best time to save the husks is when in the act of husking the corn. By a little practice, the husker will soon learn how to strip off first the outside, coarse husks, and by another motion, seize the inner ones, (removing the silks at the same time,) and dropping them into a basket at his side. It will take a little longer to husk out a bushel of corn so, but the husks will most richly repay for the extra time. When this process has been omitted, it will not be a great job to visit the husk pile after the corn is removed, and by hand, pick out enough of the clean, inside husks to make a bed. We consider such a bed worth a five dollar bill. After being made, there is no need of ever going after straw with which to fill the under beds. The job once done, is done for life.—Drew's Rural Int.

SNOW.

Snow, in latitudes, where the temperature is sufficiently low for it to fall, is of vital importance to vegetable life. Its peculiarly porous structure renders it an exceedingly bad conductor of caloric; and hence, when covering anything either warm or cold, and greatly differing in temperature from the snow itself, or from surrounding objects, it requires a long period of time for the equilibrium to be restored.

If the earth becomes early covered with snow, and before the ground is frozen, it will remain above freezing point the entire winter, even though the atmosphere temperature should go down many degrees below zero. So decided is its protection, that if the soil be penetrated with frost to the depth of several inches before the fall of snow comes on, the caloric of the subsoil will remove the frost, notwithstanding the atmosphere has not at any time risen much above freezing point. The ground had been frozen like a stone before the snow fell upon it, the weather continuing many weeks below freezing point; and yet afterwards, on removing the snow, the ground was found thawed out, and easily lifted with a shovel. Of course, a boy's reason was given for this circumstance, viz: that the snow was warm, and had thawed out the ground, instead of the true one, that its non-conducting properties had intercepted the radiation of the heat from the lower strata of the soil, and this, acting upon the upper stratum, had removed the frost.

Alpine plants, that outlive the severest winters of mountain districts because protected by snow, have perished in the comparatively warm climate of England for want of such protection. We had a good illustration of the genial influence of snow in our own country last winter. The thermometer went down to a point unprecedented in our history, being no less than twenty-two degrees below zero. That was a point of depression indicated for the first time in a record of sixty-seven years, and for how long a period previously, it is impossible to tell. At our horticultural show, however, there were exhibited several magnificent specimens of peaches, which, upon inquiry, were found in every instance to have been produced upon limbs that had, by a fortunate accident, been bent down and covered with a snow-drift. The temperature in their position did not probably fall to zero, and if they could have laid upon the ground, would barely have reached freezing point. The earth at this severe period was mantled with a heavy fall, and we tremble at the possible consequences which might have ensued in case the ground had been exposed and denuded. As it was, the frost